

Message Text

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TO AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY

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S E C R E T STATE 210334

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: BEXP, ETRD, CH, US

SUBJECT: US-CHINA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE REQUEST FOR USG
ASSISTANCE

REF: HONG KONG 10678

1. USG REPS. SHOULD NOT RPT NOT SIT IN ON US-CHINA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (USCCC) MEETINGS WITH CCPIT OR OTHER PRC ORGANIZATIONS, AND SHOULD REFRAIN FROM ACTIONS TENDING TO LEND ANY COLOR OF SPECIAL USG ENDORSEMENT TO USCCC. DESPITE SOME POSSIBLE PRCLO INVOLVEMENT IN ITS FORMATION, USCCC IS PURELY PRIVATE ORGANIZATION. STATE AND COMMERCE OFFICERS HAVE TREATED USCCC AS THEY WOULD ANY PRIVATE BUSINESSMAN OR BUSINESS ORGANIZATION, OFFERING FILLET SAME SERVICES AND ADVICE NORMALLY OFFERED TO PRIVATE CITIZENS. USLO AND CONGEN OFFICERS AT FAIR SHOULD DO LIKEWISE.

2- IN TURNING DOWN USCCC INVITATION FOR USG REPS. TO
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ATTEND MEETINGS WITH CHINESE OFFICIALS, USLO AND CONGEN OFFICERS MAY WISH TO INFORM FILLET THAT USG REPS. DO NOT NORMALLY ATTEND MEETINGS BETWEEN CHINESE AND PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS (E.G., CALIFORNIA CC, ETC.), BUT

WOULD BE INTERESTED IN RESULTS OF USCCC DISCUSSIONS. USG "OFFICE" AT CANTON FAIR PREPARED TO OFFER SAME SERVICES, HOSPITALITY, ETC. TO USCCC AS OFFERED TO OTHER PRIVATE GROUPS ON NON-DISCRIMINATORY BASIS. IF FILLET RAISES

QUESTION OF PREFERRED STATUS OF NCUSCT, NOTE THAT NCUSCT ESTABLISHED UNDER DIRECT USG AND PRC AUSPICES, HAS BEEN ACCEPTED BY USG AND PRC AS US COUNTERPART OF CCPIT, AND RECOGNIZED BY BOTH SIDES AS PRE-EMINENT US BUSINESS ORGANIZATION DEALING WITH PRC TRADING ORGANIZATIONS. WHILE PRIVATE ORGANIZATION, NCUSCT CLEARLY IN DIFFERENT CATEGORY.

3. INFORMATION IN REFTEL CONCERNING BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT OF USCCC GENERALLY CONFIRMED BY INFO AVAILABLE IN WASHINGTON. WHEN FILLET FIRST BROACHED PROPOSED FORMATION OF USCCC TO DEPTOFFS (IN MID-SUMMER, WELL AFTER ORGANIZATION OF NCUSCT), HE CLEARLY INDICATED HE SAW USCCC AS RIVAL TO NCUSCT, E.G., HE NOTED THAT NCUSCT HAD PEPSI COLA AS MEMBER, SAID HE WOULD TRY TO GET COCA COLA FOR USCCC. DEPTOFFS ATTEMPTED TO DISCOURAGE THIS LINE OF REASONING. USCCC DISCUSSIONS WITH NCUSCT SINCE THEN HAVE FOCUSED ON ELIMINATION OF "CONFLICTS OF INTEREST" (FILLET'S TERM) WITH REGARD TO LAWYERS, PR FIRMS, ETC. EMPLOYED BY TWO ORGANIZATIONS. IN CONVERSATIONS WITH FILLET, DEPTOFFS HAVE, SO FAR UNSUCCESSFULLY, ATTEMPTED TO STEER HIM IN DIRECTION OF COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH NCUSCT. SOLE RESULT SO FAR HAS BEEN CHANGE IN RHETORIC WHICH DOWNPLAYS ASPECTS OF DIRECT RIVALRY, CLAIMS TO BE FILLING NEEDS OF CONSTITUENCY OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZE COMPANIES WHICH FEEL LEFT OUT OF NCUSCT. FYI NCUSCT IS AWARE OF SMALL BUSINESSMEN'S MISGIVINGS AND IS ABOUT TO TAKE ACTION TO PERMIT ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP FOR SMALLER FIRMS AT SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED FEE. END FYI.

4. VAN LUNG'S DISCUSSIONS WITH PRCLO, REPORTED REFTEL,
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HAVE APPARENTLY BEEN WITH PRCLO OFFICIALS CONCERNED WITH UNITED FRONT WORK RATHER THAN COMMERCIAL MATTERS. PRC MAY SEE FILLET'S CHAMBER AS MEANS OF ORGANIZING SUPPORT IN CHINESE-AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY, WHICH HERETOFORE CONSERVATIVE AND ALIGNED WITH KMT BUT NOW SLOWLY EVOLVING TOWARD MORE NEUTRAL AND/OR PRO-PRC ATTITUDES. VAN LUNG HIMSELF APPEARS TO HAVE PRETENSIONS TO LEADERSHIP OF CHINESE-AMERICAN COMMUNITY NOT ONLY IN WASHINGTON, BUT NATIONWIDE. HE MAY SEE USCCC AS ONE AVENUE FOR ACHIEVING THIS STATUS.

5. DEPT. HAS NOT SEEN LIST OF USCCC MEMBERS, AND DESPITE VIGOROUS USCCC MEMBERSHIP DRIVE, DEPT. HAS SEEN NO EVIDENCE TO SUBSTANTIATE FILLET'S CLAIMS OF NATIONAL

MEMBERSHIP OUTSIDE OF CHINESE-AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY.
USCCC HURRIEDLY ESTABLISHED ON EVE OF FILLET'S DEPARTURE
FOR CANTON, MAY NOT EVEN BE LEGALLY INCORPORATED YET

(THERE IS TAIWAN-ORIENTED ORGANIZATION IN WASHINGTON
WITH NAME SIMILAR ENOUGH TO POSE LEGAL PROBLEMS TO
INCORPORATION UNDER NAME OF USCCC). ABOUT A WEEK BEFORE
DEPARTURE, FILLET HIRED WILLIAM TRIPLETT AS ASSISTANT
AND INSTALLED HIM IN OFFICE IN DOWNTOWN WASHINGTON. AS
FAR AS WE KNOW, USCCC HAS NO OTHER STAFF. USCCC BROCHURES
AND PR MATERIALS APPEAR TO OVERSTATE CURRENT CAPABILITIES
CONSIDERABLY. HOWEVER, USCCC HAS BEEN APPROACHING IMPOR-
TANT INDUSTRIAL GROUPS IN US CONCERNING MARKETING RE-
SEARCH PROJECTS IT ATTEMPTED TO PROMOTE; E.G., APPROACH
TO AMERICAN PAPER INSTITUTE WITH PROPOSED EXTENSIVE
PROJECT TO SURVEY INDIVIDUAL FIRMS CONCERNING POTENTIAL
PAPER EXPORTS TO PRC--PAPER BEING A COMMODITY IN
TIGHT SUPPLY IN WORLD MARKETS NOW. IN SELLING THIS IDEA,
USCCC CLAIMS ITS CONTACTS WITH PRCLO BETTER THAN NCUSCT'S
AND CLAIMED GREATER CAPABILITY IN DEALING WITH
CHINESE. KISSINGER

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